

Virginia Cave Board

February 22, 2003

The Virginia Cave Board met in a regular business session on February 22, 2003 at Endless Caverns in New Market, Virginia. Chairman Barbara Moss called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present

Mr. Bob Barns
Dr. David Culver
Mr. Joe Davis
Dr. John Holsinger
Ms. Karen M. Kastning
Mr. Bill Keith
Ms. Barbara L. Moss
Ms. Carol Zokaite
Mr. Roy Powers

Members Absent

Dr. Kurt Buhlmann
Ms. Katherine Harbury

Non-members Present

Ms. Patti Barns
Mr. Joey Fagan (Secretary of the Virginia Cave Board)
Mr. Robert Handley
Dr. Ernst Kastning
Ms. Judy Molnar
Mr. Charles Rice
Dr. Steve Roble
Mr. Larry Smith
Mr. Wil Orndorff
Miss Travertine Orndorff
Miss Naomi Orndorff

2. Introduction and Announcements

Chairman Barbara Moss welcomed members of the Virginia Cave Board and guests.

Former Virginia Cave Board Member Ms. Rhoda Perozzi, who is now living in Beijing, China, sent her regards to members and guests of the Board via email during a recent visit to Virginia.

Mr. Wil Orndorff announced Drinking Water in Karst Terrain: A Groundwater Conference and Field Seminar that is being held on May 21 to 22, 2003 in Abingdon, Virginia. Event information is posted on the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation web page.

Ms. Karen Kastning announced the Ninth Multidisciplinary Conference on Sinkholes and the Engineering and Environmental Impacts of Karst to be held September 9 to 10, 2003 in Huntsville, Alabama.

3. Minutes

The Board accepted the minutes of the November 23, 2002 meeting. Roy Powers noted the following clarification.

- Page 4 – under “Bone Cave Status” the entry should read: “Native American remains removed from Bone Cave in Lee County were interred at a site in Amherst County on land owned by the Monacan Indian Nation. Only a portion of the existing remains were removed from the cave for research purposes and eventually buried on Monacan lands; the unexcavated remains are still in Bone Cave.”

4. Treasurers Report

Treasurer Ms. Karen Kastning submitted the Treasurer’s report to the Board.

Old Business

5. Committee Reports

A. Education Committee

- Virginia Cave Appreciation Week 2003 plans were discussed. Cave Appreciation Week 2003 will be held in conjunction with Earth Science Week and will support selected SOL’s.
- Ms. Karen Kastning reported on the status of the Cave Owners Newsletter. Thanks were expressed for the hard work performed by Charlotte Lucas in compiling the list of cave landowners.

B. Environmental Response Committee and Sinkhole Protection Committees gave a joint report.

- Mr. Bill Keith reported on a large landslide from a construction site in Russell County closed Route 71 and may cause negative impacts to a karst system including at least one significant cave. It appears that the

landowner failed to file a proper Erosion and Sediment Control Plan and was operating in violation of a stop work order issued by Russell County when the landslide occurred. This is the same project referred to in earlier correspondence between the Virginia Cave Board and Mr. Stanley Campbell of Russell County.

Mr. Bill Keith moved: The Virginia Cave Board will write a letter to the Virginia State Water Control Board to inform the Water Control Board about the problems associated with Mr. Dorton's project.

Dr. David Culver seconded.

VOTE: Passed unanimously

- Dr. John Holsinger reported the Lee County Cave Isopod (*Lirceus usdagalun*) seems to be making a comeback in caves near the Cedars Natural Area Preserve. Mr. Wil Orndorff reported on recent dye tracing studies relating to the Lee County Cave Isopod Recovery Plan. It was pointed out that increased precipitation could result in an increase in leachate flow from the sawdust piles on Russell Lumber Lands that could adversely impact the karst aquifer that provides habitat for the federally endangered isopod.

6. Virginia Karst Program

Mr. Wil Orndorff reported on the recent activities of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Division of Natural Heritage Karst Program.

- Mr. Wil Orndorff and Mr. Joey Fagan are working with Mr. Jonathan Lanford, Mr. John Mlinarcik, Ms. Kelly Ramsey, and Mr. Tom Roberts of the DCR Division of Soil and Water Conservation to examine stormwater issues in karst areas. Work will likely result in a revision of "Technical Bulletin No. 2: Hydrologic Modeling and Design in Karst" as well as production of a new design guidance document for use in karst areas.
- The Karst Program held a Stormwater and Karst Workshop on January 30, 2003 at Radford, Virginia. The purpose of the workshop was to present and discuss technical documents and ordinances pertaining to stormwater runoff from land development in karst topography and gather comments from participants. About 70 persons attended the workshop from various Virginia agencies, county governments, and private companies.

- Conservation Site Boundaries are developed for 70 of Virginia's significant caves. Work to delineate additional Conservation Site Boundaries is continuing.
- Mr. Larry Smith reported on land acquisition plans relating to cave protection by the DCR Division of Natural Heritage. The Cedars Natural Area Preserve in Lee County now contains 708 acres in 9 different tracts.
- Ms. Barbara Moss reported on a letter received from Mr. Braven Beaty of The Nature Conservancy in regards to Unthanks Cave in Lee County. The Board discussed concerns about Unthanks Cave and strategies to protect the cave and karst resources in central Lee County, Virginia.

7. Project Underground

Ms. Carol Zokaites reported that many teacher workshops have been presented at various locations throughout Virginia. Plans are underway to organize a series of workshops for Boards of Supervisors members and Planning District Commission staff in coordination with Dr. Jesse Richardson of Virginia Tech. Ms. Zokaites spoke of plans for a workshop to be held March 7, 2003 at Grand Caverns where teachers in attendance would be taught about karst protection and the concept of a meaningful watershed experience for their students.

8. Grand Caverns

Mr. Robert Handley of the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias (CCV) reported on his organization's recent work at Grand Caverns in Augusta County, Virginia.

- A barrier grate to secure the entrance was fabricated and installed by hand with donated labor by members of the Battlefield Area Troglodyte Society (BATS) using 3.25 tons of steel provided by CCV.
- The Cave Conservancy of the Virginias will provide a museum exhibit on caves for display at Grand Caverns. The exhibit, previously displayed at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, was designed and constructed using CCV funds.

Mr. Larry Smith noted that DCR is seeking recommendations for lands contiguous to Grand Caverns for consideration for purchase. Only properties from willing sellers are to be acquired. The recommendations are due by March 31, 2003.

Dr. John Holsinger moved that the Virginia Cave Board send a letter to Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Director Joe Maroon recommending lands for acquisition in the vicinity of Grand Caverns and Cave Hill based on conservation site boundary information and investigations.

Seconded by Mr. Roy Powers

Passed unanimously

- Mr. Bob Barns reported the producers of the Public Television show “Virginia Currents” are interested in doing an educational piece on Grand Caverns.
- Mr. Larry Smith noted that a resolution passed by the General Assembly has requested that the Upper Valley Regional Park Authority submit a plan for inclusion of the Grand Caverns and Natural Chimneys into the state park system by October 1, 2003. The plan shall be submitted to the Secretary of Natural Resources. The plan shall propose conditions for conveyance to the Commonwealth and continued possible local support for operations of the facilities. DCR shall cooperate with the UVRPA in developing the plan. This resolution does not obligate the Commonwealth to accept conveyance of the properties.

9. U. S. Forest Service Significant Cave Listing

Mr. Joey Fagan reports that the five caves cave nominated by the Virginia Cave Board for protection under the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988 have been found by the Federal Regional Interagency Review Team to qualify as significant caves.

New Business

10. Cave Board-VDOT Field Day

Mr. Wil Orndorff presented a suggestion by Mr. Phil Lucas of the Virginia Speleological Survey that a field day be held for the purpose of conducting an educational program and caving trip for selected VDOT personnel. Dr. David Culver suggested a coordinated program be designed for educational outreach for

various interested organizations including VDOT. Mr. Bill Keith will contact Mr. Lucas to discuss potential programs and field trips.

11. Interstate 81 Cave

Mr. Wil Orndorff reported he has received accounts of boulders being piled in front of the entrance and possible damage to the gate. It was noted that a management plan should be developed and the gate should be inspected and repaired or replaced as needed. Mr. Bill Keith will contact VDOT representatives to discuss the matter.

12. Public Comments

Mr. Robert Handley of the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias (CCV) announced the organization's recent acquisition of 170 acres in southwestern Virginia to protect the cave and karst resources on what is to be known as the Powell Mountain Karst Preserve.

Ms. Karen Kastning reported that an article the Spring 2003 issue of Nature Conservancy Magazine features an article on photographing caves.

Ms. Judy Molnar reported that a cave exhibit is being developed for the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News, Virginia.

13. Times and Places for Future Meetings of the Virginia Cave Board

- May 31, 2003 Richmond, Virginia
- September 13, 2003 Radford, Virginia
- November 22, 2003 Staunton, Virginia

14. Adjournment

Chairman Barbara Moss adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Joey Fagan
Virginia Cave Board Secretary